

Statement by Dan Ashe
Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
House Approval of Duck Stamp Price Increase
November 18, 2014

On behalf of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, I commend the House of Representatives for approving an increase in the price of the Federal Duck Stamp yesterday. The increase is desperately needed, and I hope the Senate takes action to approve the increase in the current Congress.

Wetland landscapes, and the habitat they provide for waterfowl and other native species, are at risk across the country, as rising commodity prices fuel both increasing land prices and the conversion of small wetlands for crop production. This is especially true in the "Duck Factory" of the Prairie Pothole Region. The Federal Duck Stamp Program provides vital funding for land acquisition and protection in this region - the cradle of North America's waterfowl breeding habitat - and in other breeding, resting and wintering habitat nationwide.

The price of the Duck Stamp hasn't increased in more than two decades, and our ability to protect vital habitat continues to decline. The much overdue increase approved by the House was also requested in the President's budget, and enjoys bipartisan support. Raising the price of the stamp from \$15 to \$25 would enable us to protect an estimated 17,000 additional acres of waterfowl habitat every year.